

Foes close in on CIA's Turner

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WASHINGTON — Not long ago the Washington Post changed the photograph it uses of Adm. Stansfield Turner, President Carter's Naval Academy classmate and increasingly embattled director of central intelligence.

The old picture depicted a typically self-confident Turner: Eyes keen, glance alert, jaw firm. By contrast, the new one shows a different admiral: Brow furrowed, mouth drawn down, eyes hurt and defensive.

In Washington, where every tea leaf has its message, such changes don't happen by accident; nor do they go unnoticed.

The personable, articulate, bright Turner — who long burnished his image as the thinking man's admiral — has suddenly become the controversial Turner.

In a word, the admiral is in trouble. Turner is catching it from several directions. On the one hand, the

liberal, anti-CIA community is angry with Turner's determined but unsuccessful attempt to make the agency's secrecy oath stick in the case of a former CIA official, Frank Snepp, author of "Decent Interval," a kiss-and-tell expose about Vietnam.

ON THE OTHER hand, and far more serious for the admiral's once seemingly bright future, is a constellation of troubles arising from his thus far stormy administration of an already-battered CIA.

That the administration may be concerned over the worsening state of affairs at the CIA under Turner is sug-

gested by a White House decision — disclosed last week in The Detroit News — to appoint Frank C. Carlucci III, now American ambassador in Lisbon, as the admiral's deputy.

President Carter confirmed yesterday he will nominate Carlucci for the job. The post has remained unfilled since the resignation last July of the previous deputy director, Enno Henry Knoche, an intelligence professional who left in protest over Turner's policies.

Carlucci, 47, a Princeton honor graduate who in 21 years rose from junior vice-consul to ambassador, with detours — while on loan from State — to be deputy director of the budget and, later, undersecretary of Health, Education and Welfare, is regarded by many as extremely able. His expected appointment is being welcomed in the intelligence community by those who see the choice of Carlucci as a signal to Turner for probable changes in course and speed.

THE ACCUSATIONS against Turner, now leaking out of every crevice in the agency's formerly taut and secure headquarters at Langley, Va., fall into two groups: Those of substance against his administrative competence, and those directed at his personal style.

Both his competence and his style have been bitterly attacked following his abrupt decision to fire 720 senior people from the CIA's clandestine service, which conducts cloak-and-dagger espionage and counterespionage.

Clandestine-service insiders who criticize that decision point out a number of factors. Among them:

- Their department — the Directorate for Operations — has already been shrunk more than 50 percent from its top strength of 8,500, which it had in 1969.
- Despite Turner's obvious infatuation with high-technology intelligence gadgetry supposed to replace the old-fashioned spook (spy), no device yet can look inside Chairman Leonid Brezhnev's head.
- Heavy reliance on satellites and electronic intelligence renders the United States highly vulnerable to counter-technology (for example, a Russian satellite-killing laser).
- So many jobless, nearly unemployable former American spies and counterspies would certainly be attractive to foreign governments seeking to augment their intelligence services.

Angered agency veterans charge that Turner's main thrust in targeting the clandestine services for what some call "dismemberment" actually comes from Vice-President Walter Mondale, remembered on Capitol Hill as one of the intelligence community's most un-

yielding foes, and from Mondale's assistant, David Aaron, who worked closely with Mondale as a staffer with the Senate's Church committee on intelligence. Aaron is also widely regarded as unfriendly toward the CIA and other intelligence agencies.

ONE SENIOR retired CIA official bluntly said, "Stan Turner is simply apple-polishing Fritz Mondale for another, bigger job."

Other complaints which have surfaced against Turner are that he is an empire builder who has involved CIA in needless, largely unsuccessful feuds within the government (such as that for control over Defense Secretary Harold Brown's Defense Intelligence Agency); that he has harmed CIA morale; and that, in the words of the same retired CIA official, "He is the first director we have had who has so blatantly used the agency for his own purposes."

Turner hasn't expressly spelled out his future purposes, but it came as little surprise to those who have watched his career to note that, on taking his CIA appointment, he took steps (at an appreciable sacrifice in ultimate retirement benefits) to retain his active four-star rank in the Navy.

That action strongly suggests that the admiral hopes for a still-higher job in uniform — almost certainly, say Turner-watchers, as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the top military position in the armed forces.

TURNER IS 54. In two or at most four years, if President Carter follows the traditional pattern of service rotation of the chairmanship, the Navy's turn will come. Should Turner then be completing a successful tour at the CIA, it would be logical for his Annapolis classmate in the White House to gratify what would be Turner's — or any other regular officer's — highest ambition.

Ambition, however, is the most-often encountered criticism of Turner's style and seems to underlie a variety of other complaints directed against the admiral from his numerous detractors at Langley.

Unlike past directors who spent most of their time at the Langley headquarters, observers say, Turner — delighted with the new office he demanded and obtained in the prestigious Old Executive Office Building next to

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